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PHOTO OF A DELICIOUS COMBINATION OF FIVE CLASSIC FLAVORS BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

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City council hears short-term rental concerns

BY THERESE DONNELLY

The City of New Buffalo's upcoming fiscal year is down on paper, as the New Buffalo City Council approved the annual budget, including millage rates, at its Monday, May 20, meeting.

In presenting the millage rates to the council, city manager Darwin Watson explained that state regulations mean the rates decrease as taxable property values increase. This year's rates are 9.5151 for the General Operating Fund, 0.4279 for the Parks and 0.2325 for the Streets and Roads.

The budget anticipates a $573,294 general fund deficit, which Watson explained was caused by increased costs for personnel and various projects. He went on to explain the city had built up a fund budget over the previous 10 years, which allows the city to pull from the accumulated surplus.

Several residents attending the meeting addressed concerns with issue at short-term rentals and what they perceive as a lack of enforcement of ordinance violations. Homeowners on West Merchant stated a rental property in their neighborhood had recently been used for a large party, with more than 50 people parking in neighboring driveways and loitering on private property. Police responded to multiple calls regarding the property and broke up the party. The property manager told the council he was "mortified" by the incident and had learned the renters used a stolen credit card and fake identification.

Several residents expressed frustration that violations to the short-term rental ordinances seem to go unenforced and questioned if the city police department has the manpower to manage large parties.

Police chief Rich Killips said police can handle large gatherings and has backup from other agencies if required, but need to be made aware of issues. He urged residents to contact the city police department to report problems. Echoing this in council comments, mayor John Humphrey said he had received many messages from people expressing concern and frustration, but not contacting the police.

The council voted unanimously to support the Great Lakes Coalition's initiatives to nourish and replenish shorelines. GLC President Ron Watson said the organization is urging legislation to establish funding to protect the shores from erosion and flooding. Treasurer Ed Oldis added that most states have funding set aside for shoreline protection, but despite having the largest freshwater shoreline in the world, Michigan does not.

With Memorial Day Weekend approaching, Nora Howe and Karen Shoemaker of the lifeguard committee urged the council to place buoys in the swimming areas soon.

In their April meeting, the council tabled a decision on the purchase of new picnic tables for Oselka Park, in part because work still needed to be done to prevent further damage by birds in the pavilion ceiling. The council approved the purchase during their May meeting.

The council approved two special event applications for outdoor concerts. New Buffalo Explored requested approval for a performance by Minor Moon at the Marina on July 11. Southwest Michigan Symphony received permission for a concert on Aug. 8 at Lions Park Pavilion.

Brewster's submitted a Special Use Permit Amendment and site plan for outdoor seating at the restaurant at 11 W. Merchant Street. Councilmember Brian Flanagan noted work had begun on the space before the restaurant applied for the permit. Watson confirmed but said work had stopped when the issue was realized, and city officials realized there was no fee schedule for such situations. He said penalties should be established for large unpermitted projects.

The council approved the amendment request.

Jacob Moore requested site plan approval for a single-family residence at 16 N. Smith Street.

As part of the waterfront improvement project, the council agreed to pay Abonmarche Engineering $268,300 for engineering, regulatory and construction administration costs related to the plans for a pedestrian bridge over the Galien River to the city beach.

Towards the end of the evening, Michael Morphey of Abonmarche gave a brief update on the waterfront projects. He said King Company is scheduled to begin dredging the channel Aug.1, weather permitting. Abonmarche had secured a five-year dredge permit, which allows emergency dredging if needed in the federal channel.

Morphey said the DNR had set various fish spawning windows to run May 15 through June 30, but the state had granted a permit to work during that time.

Like your Fates.
— Dino N. Fatouros

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

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CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
PETE RAHM, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, JACK ROGERS
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
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Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, BRADLEY BURNER, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, BILL MARSKE
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday October thru March at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER BLAKE O'HALLORAN, JAMES BRACEWELL, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Farmed and Forged Market coming to New Buffalo Farmers Market this summer

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

A collaboration with The Collective will hopefully revitalize the annual New Buffalo Farmers Market this summer, Elisha Taylor, director of the New Buffalo Business Association (NBBA) Board, said at the New Buffalo Township Board meeting Monday, May 20.

Taylor said that The Collective runs the La Porte-based Farmed and Forged Market, which the NBBA plans on bringing to this summer's market.

This year, the market will take place Thursday from 5-8 p.m., May 30- Sept. 5 (excluding July 4).

Taylor said that Farmed and Forged pairs up with a local nonprofit every month.

She added that the SNAPS benefits will also be implemented: Anyone who's a part of the EBT usage can bring $20 in benefit voucher to the market, which will be matched to give "local people $40 to spend on produce that's grown regionally, locally and within a 100 mile radius."

"So that really opens it up to locals of all income levels to shop and get local, fresh produce," Taylor said.

She said that the NBBA is trying to gain support from the township and other businesses. The organization is asking for $3,000 from the township, which will be used toward The Collective for helping the NBBA put the market on as well as to support the small businesses who are starting "grass roots at the vendor level" that may eventually help them get a brick and mortar and the area farmers.

Taylor said it's $35 to be a vendor per day, with opening day having around 32 vendors.

Clerk Michelle Hannon said that a small, local vendor reported that she couldn't afford the market's $300 that's required to cover insurance, which isn't a requirement of all the surrounding markets. She suggested that a few scholarships be set up for small, Michigan based vendors who can't afford the entrance fee. Taylor said that she believes that the head of The Collective would like the idea.

Board members accepted a bid from PayJay Construction, Inc. for $1,396,292.50 with regards to the U.S. 12 Water/ Sewer Project. New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit said that this means the board will now officially award the bid to PayJay, which is set to start on the project at the beginning of July.

The transfer of $200,000 from the Local Revenue Sharing Board to the General Fund was approved.

A bid for $59,966 from Dukes Root Control, Inc. for contracting water service inspections, which Heit said are states required service inspections, was approved.

A bid for $149,000 from LC United Painting to repaint the water tower was approved.

An invoice from the Bill Deputy Foundation for $85,833.33 for Pleasure Isle Marina, which Heit said is the township's fourth payment, was approved.

Board members approved sending letters of support that the Berrien County Road Department vacate undeveloped 1st Street off Grand Avenue and undeveloped La Porte Road of M-239.

Board members adopted a resolution supporting the Great Lakes Coalition's request to the state for a strategy for restoring Michigan's beaches. Heit said that some local people are in the coalition and that the resolution is requesting the state to appropriate $50 million for at least one year to address shoreline erosion.

An amendment to the employee handbook that states that employees must have used all forms of PTO first first to take unpaid time off was approved.

Preliminary approvals for SLUs to operate an adult-use marihuana retail establishment were granted to Oasis Wellness Center of Bangor Twp. IV LLC at Harbor Country Drive, Mitten State Engineering LLC at 11451 O'Brien Court and an SLU amendment was made to New Buffalo Holdings, LLC at 1153 O'Brien Court (Heit said that URB would like to knock down the front portion of the building to change some parking).

A final approval for an SLU to operate an adult-use marihuana retail establishment was granted to Casey Kornoelje, Five Lakes NBT, Inc at 19267 U.S. 12.

Judith Zabicki, former clerk at the township, said she was stepping down as the representative on The Pokagon Fund Board of Directors as of the end of June due to having moved to Arizona. In their consent agenda, board members approved Patty Iazzetto as the representative effective July 1.

"It's been a great eight years working with Dan (Petersen, the executive director) and The Pokagon Fund and I immensely enjoyed being the chair…I've been very proud of what we've done," she said.

My Mama been told me, don't give no poor performance. — *Lil Baby*

Johanna and Islay Welter gaze at the selection of plants

Plant lovers chose their selection of plants

Gardeners congregate at the pavilion at Harbert Community Park

Bonnie Pollack purchases her plants from Lorrie Gibson

Gardeners flock to River Valley Garden Club Plant Sale

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Those who have a green thumb started lining up at Harbert Community Park an hour before the 16th annual River Valley Garden Club Plant Sale Saturday, May 18.

"We had people lined up starting at 9," Elizabeth Palulis, president of the club, said, adding that one member said it was akin to what one may witness at a Madonna concert.

The sale featured home grown perennials, flowers, ground cover, vegetable plants, bushes and small trees, all from the gardens of club members. There were even some house plants.

This year, Palulis said that 40 members of the over 100 member club brought plants.

"They dig their own plants and it's always amazing the variety that we have every year," she said.

Palulis brought in a queen-of-the-prairie, which she described as being tall with a pink plume, as well as some black-eyed Susans and catmint.

All of the plants that were at the sale were grown locally.

"The big deal with plants now is to grow native - they attract birds, bees and butterflies," Palulis said.

Celebrating her 12th year as a member of the garden club, Susan Stevens added that, since the plants are grown locally, they don't need to be acclimated to the sometimes fickle southwest Michigan or Indiana climate.

"They know the rainfall and the cold and the heat and even the freeze of winter - I leave my stuff out all winter, so they're hardened," she said.

Stevens propagates her plants, taking cuttings from her bushes. She said the ones she's selling at this year's sale were started last fall, and that she's already started new ones for next year.

Stevens said she always digs up some of her plants that spread a lot.

"People come up and say, 'Oh, I bought this last year and it's doing really well' - so they came back for more," she said.

Having taken root in 1967, River Valley Garden Club is a part of the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. and National Garden Clubs, Inc. Members come from nearby communities such as Harbert, Sawyer and New Buffalo as well as St. Joseph/Benton Harbor and Indiana.

The club has supported organizations related to nature and gardening, such as the Berrien County Youth Fair, Chikaming Open Lands, Fernwood Botanical Garden, Sarett Nature Center and Michigan Garden Clubs Scholarship Funds. Funds for these charitable projects come from the May plant sale and the members-only September Plant Auction.

Palulis said that most of the money raised at the sale goes to the $1,000 they allocate toward scholarships to local seniors who will be studying horticulture or agriculture. This year, two Bridgman seniors will be getting $500 each.

The club meets every month except January at Harbert Community Church to listen to speakers and attend workshops on subjects such as propagating your own flowers and flower arranging. In June, Jocelyn Tuszynski, owner of Flourish Books and Plants in New Buffalo, will be speaking. The group also takes field trips to places such as Fernwood Botanical Gardens and Sarett Nature Center. In July, they'll be trekking to the St. Joseph Senior Center, where one of their members manages the walking trail

Staying active in community endeavors is important to club members. In February, Palulis became "appalled" at all the styrofoam used at Corewell Health South, which was where her husband stood for four days. It was suggested by one of the members that they send postcards to Loren Hammel, president of the Corewell Health South, about their concerns.

After the four postcards were sent in March, Palulis also wrote a letter.

"I said, 'I bet you were wondering where those postcards came from' and I told the story of my husband…So then I got a letter back from Hammel that said, 'We are going to eliminate styrofoam,'" she said.

Grand Beach Village Council approves master plan

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Members of the Grand Beach Village Council adopted a resolution from the Planning Commission for approval of a Master Plan at their Wednesday, May 15, meeting.

Council members had approved the draft plan in February. It had gone to local agencies, which had 63 days to make comments, and had also been on the village's website. The draft was returned to the Master Plan Task Force, which made any necessary changes, and then returned to the Planning Commission before coming to the village council for final approval.

The plan was approved in a 4-1 vote, with James Bracewell being the dissenting vote.

Bracewell said he held the same position that he had in January 2023, which was that the village needed a "professional company to come in and consult the master plan process."

For state compliance, the council had hired a consultant, Beckett and Raeder, Inc., to review the plan.

Brian Hake from Kruggel, Lawton & Company LLC gave the annual audit presentation.

Hake said the general fund's fund balance of $1.6 million represents about 22.4 months of expenditures, which is "pretty healthy."

The fund had a positive year, with an increase of about $283,000 All governmental funds combined increased about $73,000.

With regards to the proprietary funds, the water fund increased about $47,000 and the golf fund increased $25,000 for the fiscal year.

A resolution regarding the village's support of installing a traffic signal at U.S. 12 and Grand Beach Road was adopted.

Council member Peter Doerr and council president Harry Walder recently met with Marcy Hamilton, senior planner/ executive director of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, and Adrian Stroupe, the southwest region planner for MDOT, at the railroad tracks at U.S 12 and Grand Beach Road, where the bicycle crossing will be occurring with regards to the imminent Marquette Greenway and that a way not to put the bicycles next to the automobiles is still being explored. Doerr added that expanding the area for bicycles to congregate on the right hand turn coming out of Grand Beach was also discussed, as the current plan has them "really stacked up next to the stop sign."

Council members approved a revised offer from Bob Vanecko to purchase a portion of the property known as "Jensen Court" from the village for $150,000, subject to village attorney Sara Senica reviewing the proposal.

Per the proposal, Vanecko owns the property located at 50015 Calla Avenue (Lots 17, 18 and 19). In 2019, he purchased Lot 19, which has historically had a use of a circular drive adjacent to it on Calla Avenue. The "parcel owned by the village (hereinafter 'Jensen Court'), fronts lake View Avenue, and is where the driveway used by Lot 18 is located," the proposal states. Vanecko is interested in purchasing the piece of Jensen Court that contains the driveway.

The proposal states that the "rectangular portion which village residents use to access the beach would not be disturbed and all rights for beach access would remain intact."

Doerr, the parks and beaches commissioner, said that the property isn't "usable" for the village. Selling it to Vanecko would be a "win, win" for everyone, as the village has wanted to build a parking area and platform there for a long time. The $150,000 would fund the walkway and viewing platform and the stairs.

Regarding zoning amendments, councilmembers approved recommendations from the Planning Commission that the use of "Structure, Removable" in the village be clarified and it be made clear that "tents" are not a permanent structure and not allowed after a certain period of time per the current ordinance.

The Planning Commission also asked for changes to the Short-Term Rental Ordinance: to require one fire extinguisher on each floor of the residence, to eliminate the landline requirement from the current ordinance, to change the word "occupant" to "adult" in the ordinance and to eliminate the insurance requirements in the ordinance. After discussion, council members approved all changes except changing the word "occupant" to "adult" and to only require an extinguisher be in the kitchen.

Council members approved purchasing 13 beach access signs, which were discussed at previous meetings, at a cost not to exceed $3,000.

The purchase of a buoy boat for installing and removing the buoy each spring and fall at a cost not to exceed $3,000 was approved, as well as the purchase of 12 new buoys, as the several the village has are old and falling apart, for a cost not to exceed $1,800.

Council members authorized payment for JK Handyman to paint gutters and downspouts on the village building for $500, as well as to get a quote on replacing the seamless gutter.

Councilmembers approved the purchase of Sun Valley Falls Beach Access removable aluminum stairs over the stone revetment down to the beach, which will be funded by a donation from Tony Fasano and Ellen Frankle, with superintendent Bob Dabb's crew repairing the existing wood stairs as necessary.

The replacement of the 2023 Chevy Tahoe with a 2024 Dodge Durango at a cost of $8,000 from La Porte Chrysler was approved.

Walder discussed forming a construction board of appeals, which he said is mandated by the state. The village had had a board previously but had allowed it to lapse.

OUTDOOR BINGO-STYLE SCAVENGER HUNT IN NEW TROY

Weesaw Bucky Bingo, an outdoor scavenger hunt, will be available in New Troy throughout the month of June.

Participants will wander the trails in Weesaw Township Park and New Troy Community Center's woods to search for creatures and features depicted on bingo cards. Every completed card will earn a free ice cream treat.

Bingo cards can be picked up anytime from the box outside the main entrance of the New Troy Community Center. Cross off every creature or feature you find. Complete a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row to win. Bring your completed card into the New Troy Community Center Activities Room during regular hours to receive your free frozen treat.

A map on the back of each bingo card depicts the locations of hiking trails through New Troy Community Center property and Weesaw Township Park.

Activities Room hours are from 4-6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 10 a.m. to noon Friday through Saturday. Weesaw Bucky Bingo will continue through June 29. This event is sponsored and paid for by Friends of New Troy (FONT) and is free to the public, though donations to support future events are always appreciated.

The New Troy Community Center is located at 13372 California Road in New Troy. FONT is a nonprofit 501(c)3 committed to offering a welcoming space to all.

Find out more about us and our offerings at www.friendsofnewtroy.org. — STAFF REPORTS

Same storm in New Buffalo much more damaging in La Porte County

BY STAN MADDUX

There was a lot of wind and rain from the same storm in New Buffalo that caused significantly more damage in La Porte County.

Bob Stratton, owner of Service 1 Marine, said he was launching a boat for a customer at New Buffalo's lakefront Monday, May 20, when the 80-degree temperatures suddenly dropped by about 10 degrees.

Winds strong enough to blow the heavy rain sideways as it fell came next.

"It was pretty scary there for a while," he said.

The storm lasted for only about 20 minutes but produced a half inch or more of rain in spots along with hail in some locations.

In La Porte County, a dairy farm was still running on a generator the day after the storm brought down five nearby NIPSCO electrical transmission line towers.

All of the met towers fell on land the Minich family uses to raise mostly corn along with soybeans, wheat and alfalfa between Kingsbury and Union Mills.

Frank Minich said power at his family's dairy farm went out just as the generator was being hooked up to milk the cows and restore electrical service to the entire 700 to 800 head operation.

Minich said he traveling on a tractor to hook up the generator at his home a short distance away but had to drive around a number of fallen trees to get there.

He also caught his first glimpse of the fallen electrical line towers.

"There's five of them kind of bent on the ground and just lying in the fields. Kind of crazy," he said.

Westville area farmer Mark Parkman was caught in the storm while planting the final one acre of corn he has in one of his fields along Holmesville Road.

After leaving the 240 acre field, Parkman said he was driving home in his tractor pulling the planter when he encountered a nearby lightning strike he described as scary.

"It shook the whole tractor. It was closer than I care for," he said.

Parkman also said the heavy rain certainly didn't help efforts to catch up on his spring planting, which has been delayed due to what's been a wet season.

He said just 60 percent of his corn and 45 percent of his soybeans are in the ground when, normally, he's already finished with planting.

Parkman said the spring has been wet enough for him to plant in soil that's probably too wet in spots to try and catch up.

There were no confirmed reports of any tornadoes in that area but the amount of damage, especially to the towers, has people speculating.

"It had to take an awfully powerful wind shear or a straight line wind to knock those towers down. They actually crumbled to the ground," said Mike Kellems, a retired La Porte County Police officer who was out taking pictures of the towers and other storm related damage.

SPORTS

Freshman pitching ace a difference maker for Bison

BY STAN MADDUX

He's a freshman and still 14 but that hasn't stopped Jeffrey Tertel from becoming the ace of the New Buffalo High School pitching staff.

Tertel has always been one of the best pitchers in youth leagues in New Buffalo because of an overpowering fastball and his ability to consistently throw strikes.

However, Tertel said he didn't expect to do as well as he has so quickly at the varsity level, where his fastball isn't quite as overpowering as it was when the hitters he faced in youth leagues were closer to his age.

"I'm very surprised with the success I've had and I'm very happy about it," he said.

The speed of his fastball clocked in the upper 60s to low 70s is still impressive for a freshman to go along with a curveball to keep hitters off stride.

Right now, Tertel said he relies more on his defense to get hitters out by pitching to contact. .

"I'm not the hardest thrower but I get it done," he said.

Tertel with several complete games this year has been a difference maker for a team which struggles to win when other pitchers take the mound from their lack of consistency hitting the strike zone.

He gave a lot of credit for his athletic ability to his father, who he described as a superstar shortstop during his high school playing days in Racine, Wisconsin.

Tertel said his father has also been involved in teaching him how to throw strikes and keeping his throws accurate.

"During the summer, I play catch with my dad almost every day and I have since I was really young," he said.

Tertel, who lifts weights especially with his legs during the off season, believes he can reach 90 miles per hour with his fastball by the time he's senior.

His goal is to pitch for a Division 1 college program.

Head Coach Adam Lijewski said Tertel is a piece of the puzzle in terms of being a pitcher the team has needed to be more competitive on a regular basis.

"He's like that link to put in there that completes it," he said.

Lijewski said another thing helping Tertel is his knowledge of the game and having a good catcher in Vaughn Nikkel behind the plate along with good gloves at every position in the infield and outfield.

His endurance has also been a factor in the success of the team because it helps keep the arms of the other pitchers fresh.

"Jeffrey can give you 100 pitches. He helps out a lot," he said.

Freshman pitcher again key to victory for Bison

BY STAN MADDUX

The freshman ace of the pitching staff for New Buffalo pitched a complete game shutout at home in high school baseball Tuesday, May 21.

The Bison defeated Our Lady of the Lake, 14-0, in the first game of a doubleheader called after five innings under the Michigan High School Athletic Association's mercy rule.

Jeffrey Tertel ended the game by striking out the final batter, who swung and missed at a breaking low and away curve ball.

Tertel, whose fastball has reached as high as 75 miles per hour this season, gave the hot bats of his teammates credit for keeping him relaxed with an early lead before putting the game away with a high scoring fourth inning.

"It really made me more confident on the mound. I think that's really where most of my success came from," he said.

New Buffalo opened up the scoring when Hagen Davis led off the second inning with a single to right center field.

Davis advanced to third base on a throwing error and came home on a sacrifice fly to left field by Braden Huffer.

Vaugh Nikkel later drove in Sam Wendell Suppa and Giovanny Sanchez Perez with a single up the middle before the inning was over.

The Bison (12-11) scored a run in the third inning and ten more runs in the fourth inning, which began with back to back doubles from Huffer and Sanchez Perez.

Nikkel and Jaydon Berger then walked and were driven home by a sharp single to left field by Ethan Lijewski, who scored on a single to right center field by Tertel.

Two more runners crossed the plate on a hard hit single to right field by Davis, who was forced out at second base on a ground ball to the shortstop that allowed Wendell Suppa to score from third base.

The scoring ended when two runners who reached base on a fielding error and infield single came home on a single to right field by Nikkel.

After recording three strikeouts in the second inning, Tertel relied largely on his defense, which made several outstanding plays that included center fielder Sanchez Perez chasing down a hard hit fly ball heading toward the gap.

Tertel also helped himself by catching a ball bunted in the air and throwing the ball to second base to double off a runner straying too far from the bag.

Tertel said he finished the game physically strong despite the muggy, mid-80 degree temperatures.

Being replaced by a pinch runner twice during the game helped him maintain his stamina on the mound, he said.

In the second game, Our Lady of the Lake (10-8) won 15-6.

Nikkel, who was the starting pitcher for the Bison, gave up four runs in four innings before replaced by Wendell Suppa, who allowed two runs in one inning of work. Sanchez Perez went the rest of the way on the mound, giving up nine runs in two innings.

Lijewski drove in two of the runs with a double.

A beautiful face with a sexy body is a dime a dozen in showbiz. When you have magnetic personality, you beat everybody else. — *Heart Evangelista*

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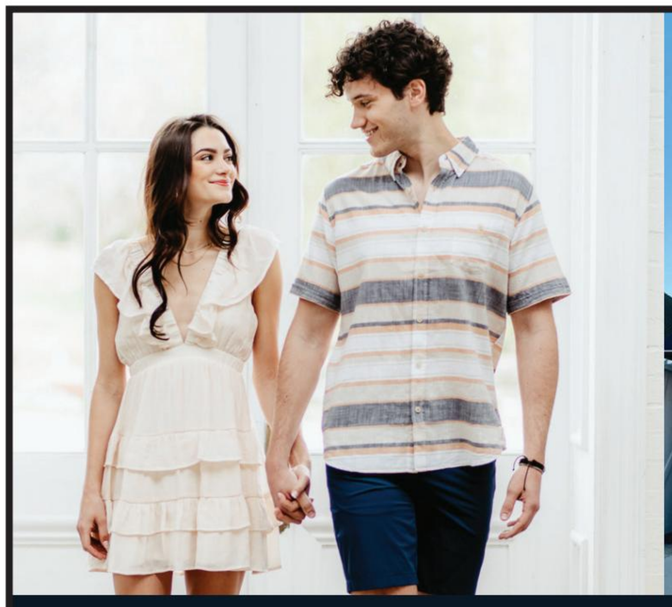

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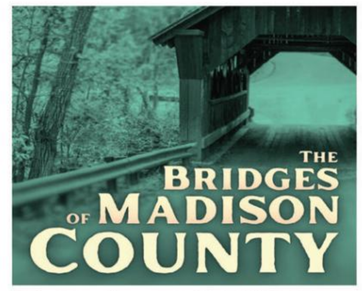

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Rainbow Cone arrives in New Buffalo

GET READY TO SLICE INTO SUMMER!

BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Calling all ice cream aficionados, sundae savants, and milkshake maniacs! Summer is just around the corner, and there's a brand new sweet spot in town: the legendary Original Rainbow Cone is opening its doors in New Buffalo, Michigan on May 25th, 2024. Find them at 1 North Whittaker Street, near the corner of East Buffalo Street (adjacent to Sonny D's).

The Rainbow Cone crew is bursting with flavor-obsession and service with a smile. They craft delicious treats with top-notch ingredients, all in a vibrant, happy place. To celebrate their upcoming grand opening, they offered free ice cream adventures on Sunday, May 19th (while the crew got their cones in a row, of course!).

For almost 100 years, The Original Rainbow Cone has been a Chicago legacy since 1926. They're famous for their iconic sliced cones—not scooped!—boasting a delicious combination of five classic flavors: chocolate, strawberry, Palmer House (a dreamy New York vanilla with cherries and nuts), pistachio, and orange sherbet.

Life's too short for just one flavor, and that's the Rainbow Cone motto. Their full menu offers something for everyone, with dozens of classic flavors, seasonal specials, and enough toppings, add-ons, and extras to make your taste buds do a happy dance. Craving a monstrous sundae or a thick, creamy milkshake? The Rainbow Cone has you covered. They've even got a unique mini-donut offering with out-of-this-world flavors.

Located at 1 North Whittaker Street in downtown New Buffalo, this new Rainbow Cone is just a stone's throw away from the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan. So grab your swimsuit, head to the beach, and then cool off with a slice (or two, or three) of summery deliciousness at The Original Rainbow Cone.

Feeling a little messy? You can order your Rainbow Cone "doe-see-doe," which means the cone is placed upside down in a cup—perfect for on-the-go adventures.

Life's too short for just one flavor at The Original Rainbow Cone in New Buffalo, Michigan

Anna, Mandy and Braiden at The Original Rainbow Cone

Rich and Karen Shoemaker at The legendary Original Rainbow Cone

Kynzi at The Original Rainbow Cone

The Original Rainbow Cone has been a Chicago legacy since 1926

Anna, Mandy and Braiden at The Original Rainbow Cone at 1 North Whittaker Street

LAW ENFORCEMENT CATCHES UP TO ALLEGED GAMBLING CHEAT

A former New Buffalo area woman is behind bars for allegedly stealing credits belonging to another slot machine player.

Leslie Tawney, 46, was taken into custody last week on charges filed in La Porte Superior Court 4 in December 2021.

According to court documents, the victim had over $240 in credits in the slot machine at Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City when he stepped away for a moment.

Tawney moved in and cashed out the machine before redeeming the credits at a nearby kiosk and left the casino, authorities said.

At some point, the victim returned and, seeing he had no credits left, notified security, who used surveillance video to identify Tawney as the alleged thief, court documents revealed.

A warrant was soon issued for her arrest, but it took more than two years before she was located and taken into custody on the warrant.

Tawney, who now resides in Michigan City, could face an up to 30 month sentence on the Level 6 felony charge. — STAN MADDUX

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Same afternoon accidents claim three lives

BY STAN MADDUX

Three people were killed in two motor vehicle accidents within one hour apart from each other in La Porte County.

The accidents happened Sunday, May 18.

In the first collision, La Porte County Police were called about 1 p.m. to the 3400 block of N. U.S. 35.

For unknown reasons, police said the motorcycle veered off the highway to the right and traveled across a lawn before striking a tree and some landscaping.

The 2012 Can Am Spyder motorcycle continued on and crashed into some boulders before coming to rest in a vegetable garden, police said.

The driver, Steven Dabney, 58, died at a hospital while his passenger Anna Thomas, 59, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Both victims were from Kingsford Heights, police said.

Police were still waiting for the results of a toxicology tests to determine if alcohol or drugs were a factor in the crash.

About one hour later, emergency responders were called to a head on collision between two vehicles on County Road 400 North near 850 East near Michigan City.

La Porte County Police said Cynthia Schoof, 74, of La Porte veered over the center line in a 2016 Audi, striking an oncoming 2021 Subaru driven by Susan Hall, 68, also of La Porte.

The drivers were not injured, police said.

The victim was 92 year old Carol Lukes.

Police said the La Porte woman was taken to a regional hospital with an upper body injury and later died at a regional hospital.

She was a passenger in the vehicle operated by Hall.

A passenger in the Schoof vehicle, Jackie Frankowski, 75, also sustained an upper body injury and was taken to a hospital.

Police did not shed light on her condition.

Additional information about both of the accidents were not released because of the ongoing investigations.

Red Arrow Highway in New Buffalo Township reopened to one lane of through traffic in both directions Monday, May 20.

"Work is still taking place, so we still advise motorists to travel with caution and be mindful of work occurring along the side of the road," a post on the Berrien County Road Department's Facebook stated.

The project, which began in March, includes drainage improvements, roadway resurfacing, the replacement of two culverts, a four lane to three lane reconfiguration and the implementation of a non-motorized trail. For project updates, visit www.bcroad.org or contact the Road Department office at 269-925-1196.

FRANCISCAN HEALTH TO OFFER 5K WALKS WITH DOCTOR

Free walks with a doctor will start later this month in Michigan City as part of a program previously created by Franciscan Health to promote healthier lifestyles and supplement the exercise individuals might already be doing.

The 5K walks through Washington Park will begin at City Hall after a brief health talk by a physician or clinical staff member and stretching, hospital officials said. However, people do not have to complete the walks.

The walks, which will begin Wednesday, May 29, will occur every Wednesday beginning at 6 p.m. following on-site registration at 5:30 p.m.

The Walk with a Doc program is a collaboration between Franciscan Health Michigan City, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, General Insurance Services, MDwise, the City of Michigan City and the Michigan City Police Department.

For more information, contact Franciscan Health Michigan City Community Health Improvement Coordinator Nila Williams at 219-283-9649 or nila.williams@franciscanalliance.org.

— STAN MADDUX

Conviction landed in murder/body dismemberment

BY STAN MADDUX

A man has been found guilty of killing his roommate in Michigan City and disposing his decaying, dismembered body in multiple trash cans.

It took a La Porte Superior Court 1 jury about three hours Thursday, May 16, to reach the verdict against John Hallett.

Hallett, 54, was convicted of murder and dismembering a corpse.

Evidence shows Hallett in 2017 choked Paul Gonzales, 64, to death and let the body lay on the basement floor for nearly two months at their home in the 1000 block of W. 9th Street.

He then cut it up with a hacksaw and disposed of the body parts in municipal trash cans, authorities said.

The men, who were living on the streets, were placed into the home together by a group serving the homeless.

Authorities said law enforcement did not know about the murder until 2022, when Hallett called police and claimed he murdered his roommate from the past.

According to police, Hallett said he killed him because he suspected Gonzales was stealing his mail and trying to get him evicted.

He was arrested about a year later at his home in Massachusetts after sufficient evidence was obtained to confirm his claims, said La Porte County Prosecutor Sean Fagan.

Presumably, Fagan said the body parts wound up in a landfill.

Without a body, Fagan said microscopic remains of a human body that were recovered from the basement floor, which was where the body had laid for nearly two months, helped land the conviction.

He credited Michigan City Police for their work in collecting that evidence.

"If they wouldn't have done what they did with this case and doing the forensic evidence on the basement floor and pointing out certain kind of samples and such, then we would not have been able to present a successful case," he said.

Hallett faces anywhere from 45 to 65 years on the murder conviction and another 30 months on the Level 6 felony dismembering a corpse conviction.

The Pokagon Fund, River Valley Schools approve agreement for sale of former Three Oaks Elementary School Building

WITH THE AGREEMENT APPROVED, "OPERATION BIG T.O.E." COMMENCES

As of Monday, May 20, the boards of River Valley Schools and The Pokagon Fund (Fund) approved an agreement for the sale of the property that contains the former Three Oaks Elementary school building.

This purchase agreement sets into motion the Fund's investigation as to whether the building and location are viable to sustain the vision of offering space for services and programs that are needed in southwestern Berrien County like early childhood education, health services, programming for children, business incubation and others. The Fund has dubbed this investigation "Operation Big T.O.E." (a homage to Three Oaks Elementary).

"For decades, the Three Oaks Elementary building has been a vital part of our community's civic life," said Dan Petersen, the Fund's executive director. "Numerous programs and services that could support families and strengthen our community currently lack a viable location in southwestern Berrien County. There is a direct connection between The Fund's mission and a continued use of the space for the public good. The Pokagon Fund is excited about Operation Big T.O.E. and continuing the legacy it's been building since 2007 of supporting projects, programs and services that benefit the communities we serve."

"I am so pleased that the deed restrictions originally placed on the property of Three Oaks Elementary School when the land was transferred to the school district by the Warren Family have been removed in court," said River Valley Schools Superintendent Dave Campbell. "We are appreciative of the Warren Family heirs working with us to free the property from the restrictions so we can sell it to enhance our community and benefit the school district. The Pokagon Fund has shown interest in purchasing Three Oaks Elementary School for quite some time and we could not be more thrilled that their vision of building a stronger community is becoming a reality. Having The Pokagon Fund purchase the school is a great thing for SW Berrien County as it could be a hub of activity to better support our community and families."

The agreement provides for a sale price of $400,000, along with the ability for the district to potentially use space in the building for the next 10 years. If the Fund were to sell the property to a private interest in the next 10 years, the district will be entitled to a portion of the proceeds, as defined by the terms of the agreement.

Over the next several months the Fund will evaluate the building/grounds, the interest and ability of service and program providers to occupy space in it and the financial viability of operating the building all while keeping its mission – improving the lives of the residents of its service area – at the top of its mind. For more information about The Pokagon Fund, visit www.pokagonfund.org. — STAFF REPORTS

Organizational meeting for senior choir at senior center

The School of American Music and the River Valley Senior Center will be holding an organizational meeting for seniors interested in joining a senior choir at 11 a.m. Tuesday, June 4, at the River Valley Senior Center located at 13321 Red Arrow Highway in Harbert.

Members of the choir must live in the River Valley Senior Center service area and be 60 years old or older. The purpose of the meeting is to see who is interested in joining and to discuss ideas and suggestions for how to proceed.

The leader of the choir will be Tom Fischer, a recently retired Lutheran pastor who currently teaches piano at the School of American Music in Three Oaks. Fischer has over 50 years musical experience as an organist, choir director and accompanist, handbell choir director, and guitarist. His "Beyond the Walls" choir has performed concerts in eight independent and assisted living facilities in Buchanan, Bridgman, St. Joseph, Stevensville and other cities.

For more information, contact the School of American Music at 269-409-1191 or schoolofamericanmusic@gmail.com or the River Valley Senior Center at 269-469-4556 or director@rvseniorcenter.org. — STAFF REPORTS

OBITUARIES

Ingrid Marie Pacovsky

1971-2024

Ingrid Marie Pacovsky, 53, of Three Oaks, died Wednesday, May 8, 2024.

Her life began January 1, 1971, in Michigan City, Indiana, the youngest of four children born to Joseph and Brigitte Pacovsky.

Ingrid loved cats. She was an avid fan of the Cubs and Dale Earnhardt, Jr.

Ingrid will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by one sister, Monica (Greg) Adkins of Three Oaks; two brothers, Garry Pacovsky of Three Oaks, Frank Pacovsky of South Bend, Indiana; two nieces, Courtney Adkins, Morgan (Daniel) Adkins; and one nephew, Zachary Adkins.

She was preceded in death by her parents and grandparents.

Family and friends will gather for a Celebration of Life on a date and at a time to be announced.

Miss Pacovsky will be laid to rest in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Three Oaks Township.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Ingrid be made to the Three Oaks Ambulance, 21 South Elm Street, Three Oaks, Michigan 49128 or to the Harbor Country Emergency Food Pantry and Thrift Store, 301 North Elm Street, Three Oaks, Michigan 49128.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks. Please share a memory or a message online at www.wagnercares.com.

A Day in the Life

A TOUGH DECISION

BY LAWRENCE VON EBELER

Even though we aren't ever ready for it, many of us old geezers are urged by our families to apply for residence in a "senior home."

The family may have a conference, with all due care and sensitivity, to suggesting assisted living. The choice is not for some candidates, who say that they will never go to a "rest home" (or whatever name you want to call them).

It's not a way for many oldsters, who would like to keep thinking that they're living as though they are self-sufficient and meaningful. There's a wide variety of these homes, with every kind of medical expertise (and expense, if you can or can't afford them). Depending on the finances, you feel obligated to consider all of them for this last chapter in your life. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.

Recently, the life of a friend of mine has been transformed after deciding to move from a darling home to a senior complex. She boasts that she loves her senior home arrangement and it's key to her contentment now. She's so relieved and so happy about her decision. It's her new "lease on life," and not at all like the fears that she felt when she lived alone. Being blind as a bat, she was ill at ease and insecure. In her new home, she doesn't feel like she has one foot in the grave.

Being an author, she likes a lot of "self reflection" time. When she has a writing project that may be challenging, she can do it. In the dining area, she loves seeing new friends at meal time, as opposed to dining alone at her old house. Her space is one spacious room that has its own kitchenette and a beautiful bath and plenty of room for her comfortable furniture, which offers her the opportunity to rest and be quiet.

What she loves most is "dinner time," when all of the residents dine in the same elegant dining area. Nan can "hold court" and chat with friends and model the new outfits that Anna, her daughter, brings to her regularly. Anna and her husband, Evan, always took good care of Mother's needs in her old home and still see her often. She had no needs that Anna and Evan would not fulfill. They are an example for all children with aging parents.

But we are talking about Nan, a woman who has lived a life of great adventure and has written several books about her life and religious history that have been used at religious colleges. Her books are available at "Flourish Books and Plants" in New Buffalo.

Her life with her husband was fascinating. Once, when they lived on a yacht, they had to fight off pirates with her husband's handy machine gun! She has many stories about that time in their lives and she wrote a book about it.

She has lived with regret about certain times of her life; however, she always made the best of it. Health challenges notwithstanding, she looks forward to every day. Recently, she purchased a computer for the blind so she can write again! Whatever the situation, she always finds inspiration. She insists that she enjoys whatever life has dealt her in so many ways. It's a lesson we all should embrace: To never let your circumstances be anything but a challenge to turn into inspiration for a change. She is forever grateful for her faith and still attends church regularly. Her favorite expression is: "We are guided by a light that we cannot see." She is her own best example.

Not one to listen to the negatives in life, she takes each day as a blessing - even if her health is causing her strife. Her words flow with her creed of positive thinking and her faith makes her the inspiration she conveys to one and all.

She's grateful for what she has and she's always upbeat and expresses her delight with life. Sounds poetic, doesn't it? No apologies for that, though - I'm talking about my friend, Nan, who teaches me in every way about making the most of your life to the end.

HOROSCOPE

MAY 23-29, 2024

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

The key to moving forward at this time, is to gain clarity about yourself. Be completely honest and forthright with yourself. Honestly investigate the motives behind your objectives. Stop employing self-escapist tactics and embrace the truth in the situations that are causing you stress.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

It is time to lay your burdens down and free yourself from oppressive situations. Take some time to hang with friends and have some fun. Avoid heavy topics by keeping conversation lighthearted. Try focusing on doing projects, and staying busy, rather than discussing current events and politics.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

There could be some social pressure to take a friendship to the next level. Be sure to be open and direct about what you expect from your partner. Remember that how things are at the beginning of a relationship, can set the tone for the long term. So be sure to be speak your truth right away.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

If you are feeling a little scattered, things will start to smooth out now. If you are confronted with passive-aggressive people, be polite but also be ready to protect your boundaries. It is best to deal with problems from a place of love than to resort to their level. Harmony and peace will prevail.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

Merging properties or sharing space goes hand in hand with cooperation and compromise. So, if you find yourself having to share close quarters this week, try to be aware of other people's feelings and ideas. Make an agreement that you will be open minded, no matter how eccentric another's views seem.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

Connections with home and family will get stronger this week. Don't shy away from uncomfortable topics or topics that may not seem age appropriate, because you may learn more about that person than you knew before, and you may know the right way to reach this person and help them.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

Through a work or school connection you will find the right advice for making some domestic changes. Be sure to take into account all the financial obligations or legal restrictions before getting too far into a new project. There may be cheaper and more effective way than you are aware of now.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

It is time to make some creative changes at work. Look for innovative ideas to surface now that could streamline your work load. It is also a good time to be more assertive when dealing higher- ups. Your work can usually speak for itself but now is the time to ask for a promotion, not just a raise.

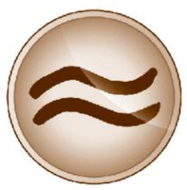
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

Get out the paint and the rollers, it is time to create a more motivating living space through color. Artistic expression is a good way to break the hum drum of a boring living space. White walls and white carpet can really make a space feel institutional; try a deep blue or a rich red.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

It is important you embrace your feminine side this week. Let things come to you. Try being more receptive than active. Sometimes the right communication happens when you are saying nothing at all. Assertive doesn't mean being aggressive, it means maintaining your boundaries.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



This week it will be easier to communicate with friends and family. If you have had a falling out or have not found the time to connect, this week you will get your chance. That doesn't mean you should unload on them, but you should definitely take this opportunity to clear the air.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

You can expect an increase in your social and public life this week. Be sure to update your social profiles or create a more effective resume. The opportunity to create a sharper image or a more accurate concept of who you are is here. Be sure to use it to further your career or financial status now.

The highest activity a human being can attain is learning for understanding, because to understand is to be free. — *Baruch Spinoza*

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		2		4		5	8	
					1	3	7	
	2				7			
5		4		6		7		
	3		5					
4		6						
		7	3					
	8		1	7				

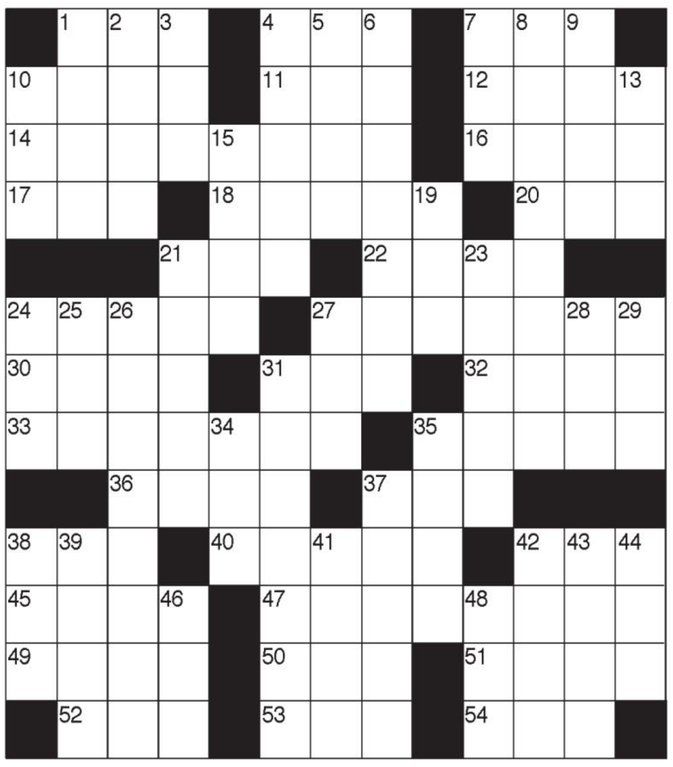
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Tally
4 Basketball Assn. of America
7 Monkey
10 Jason's ship
11 Imitate
12 Famous zeppelin
14 Despot
16 Jutelander
17 Poetess Lowell
18 Narrow
20 Prohibit
21 Swed. county
22 Old-time firing pin
24 Grave
27 Toy
30 Ring of light
31 Berne's river
32 Medicinal herb
33 Proportionally assess
35 State (Ger.)
36 Anthology (abbr.)
37 Exclamations of delight
38 Hebrew letter
40 Comedy
42 "The Jungle Book" python
45 Feed the kitty
47 Hindu queen
49 Not (Lat.)
50 Turk. title
51 Religious image
52 Compass direction
53 Serum (pref.)
54 Sheep's cry

DOWN

1 Neat
2 Agency (abbr.)
3 Fly larva
4 Stick
5 Apocrypha (abbr.)
6 Air supply
7 Signed (abbr.)
8 Strauss opera
9 Sayings (suf.)
10 Amer. Dental Assn. (abbr.)
13 Marsh
15 Axillary
19 54 (Rom. numeral)
21 Discover
23 Scand. people
24 Drain
25 Possessive pronoun
26 Keeler (2 words)
27 No (Scot.)
28 Poly. beefwood
29 But
31 Uncle of Jason
34 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (abbr.)
35 Afr. tree
37 Pickled bamboo shoots
38 Defiant shout
39 Son of Judah
41 Choler
42 N.Z. parrot
43 Wild ox
44 Own (Scot.)
46 Gelderland city
48 Cut of beef



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BIKE-N-BRUNCH ON TAP FOR NEXT MONTH

The 11th annual Radio Harbor Country Bike-N-Brunch will take place at 8:30 a.m. Sunday June 2.

Departing from the private home/studio of a local artist, riders of all levels will enjoy 9-, 20- or 30-mile loops through some of Harbor Country's most beautiful backroads. At the end of the ride, participants will enjoy a gourmet brunch of locally grown and prepared food provided through the generous support of Luisa's Harbert Swedish Bakery and Market, Sawyer Garden Center, Red Arrow Road House, Flagship Specialty Foods and Fish Market, Heston Supper Club, Green Spirit Farms and Infusco Coffee Roasters.

Rain or shine, this boutique ride and brunch will be limited to the first 150 registrants. Space is still available by registering online at www.radioharborcountry.org/events.

— STAFF REPORTS

Circus coming to area

BY STAN MADDUX

The circus is coming to La Porte.

The Shrine Extreme Circus is scheduled to perform at the Civic Auditorium on June 3-4.

The Shrine Extreme Circus is led by Ringmaster "Lucky" Malatsi, who navigates the audience through a blend of jumps and stunts displayed by BMX and moto riders, along with trapeze artists and other acts.

The circus will also feature a herd of Asian Elephants demonstrating their grace, intelligence and strength in the center ring.

For over 60 years, the Carden family, producers of the Shrine Extreme Circus, has performed before hundreds of thousands of audience members, with talent from across the globe.

General admission tickets are $20 online and $25 at the box office, with a limited number of $35 Reserved Floor seats.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.spectacularcircus.com or at the box office one hour before each show at the Civic Auditorium.

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PET OF THE WEEK

Nash

Nash lived in a foster home, so they have lots of great information from his foster momma regarding how he is in a home! She said that even though he looks nearly identical to his two other fur-brothers, he has his own unique pattern of silver/white hairs, mixed into his black fur, and it's so neat! She also said that Nash is as sweet as they come and loves any attention anyone is willing to give. If you like cuddly kittens, Nash is the one for you.

He did great with his furry foster-siblings. He is cat-, children-, and dog-friendly, and his vaccinations are up to date.

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FOR SALE

2001 Carver 39' to be sold at auction on May 28, 2024, at Oselka Marina, 514 W. Water St, New Buffalo, MI 49117.

School of American Music Spring Showcase features blossoming talent

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Intermediate and advanced students from the School of American Music (SAM) showed off their blossoming talents at a spring showcase at The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts Sunday, May 19.

Students from the studios of instructors Tom Fischer, Madison Kutch, Donna Mitchell, Tom Parisi, Garth Taylor, and Denise Vanden Bussche performed a medley of songs, such as "Sound of Silence" and "What Was I Made For?," on piano, vocal solos, such as "Cry Me a River" and "I Feel Pretty" and blues and ragtime medleys on guitar.

Students not in the Spring Showcase, will be performing at 2 and 4 p.m. Sunday, June 2, at the Episcopal Church of the Mediator, 14280 Red Arrow Highway in Harbert. The recital is free and open to the public.

Natalie Freehling sings Cry Me a River

Annekah Witter and Garth Taylor perform a Ragtime Medley

Abby Douglass sings I Feel Pretty

Tom Pairisi performs with Garth Taylor on the guitar

Eli Todd performs The Sound of Silence

Claire Sullivan performs Don't Stop Believing

Ella Hart performs on guitar with instructor Tom Pairisi

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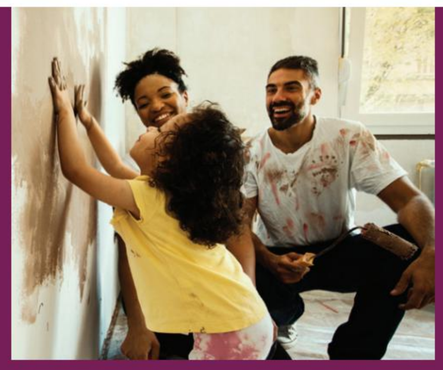

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